COURAGE TO STAND UP FOR GOD

Psalm 31:24 “Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

INTRODUCTION:

A. The text was from David’s experience. He knew what God could do.
B. At the time of our message, David was teenager 15-16 years old.

1 Samuel 17:33 “And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

1 Samuel 17:42 “And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.”

1. The word youth as used in these verses speaks of a teenager.
2. More decisions are made that effect the way we live during our teenage years than at any other time in our life.
3. In this message I hope to show the importance of courage being one of those choices: Courage to make right decisions.

C. Courage is when our mind and spirit enables us to face danger or opposition without fear, to stay calm, and act bravely; the ability to do what we know is right.
D. This certainly fits David in this passage. Does it fit us today?
E. It is my prayer that it will challenge us all before we close the message to have the courage to stand for the Lord and truth.

I. COURAGE CHOOSES THE RIGHT CAUSE.

1 Samuel 17:29 “And David said, what have I now done? Is there not a cause?”

A. After the Civil War, a group of men asked General Robert E. Lee if they could use his name to endorse a company.
1. He replied, “My name is all I have left, and it is not for sale.”
2. If a good name is lost, it may take years or worse, it may never be recalled.

B. When Israel's armies stood afraid and doing nothing, David saw the cause and by faith he found the courage to step forward.

1 Samuel 17:11 “When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.”

1 Samuel 17:24 “And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.”

1. The daring had been going on for forty days; Time was running out on choices. Do we stand and fight or turn and run?

1 Samuel 17:16 “And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.”

2. The time had come to see the cause and choose courage to stand up for it. It is time to stand up for Jesus and Landmark Doctrine.

C. David judged the cause wisely.

1. The armies of God had been dared to come out and fight and this was all the cause David needed.

1 Samuel 17:26 “And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

2. He judged it on the basis of past victories won by God.
1 Samuel 17:36 “Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.”

3. He judged it on the basis that God had been defied.

1 Samuel 17:45 “Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.”

4. The way to judge a cause is to ask “where is the Lord’s side?”

   a. This takes courage in the face of so many that are seeking supporters for their causes today.
   b. This takes courage when peer pressure is pushing in the other direction.

5. It took a teenager named David to say, “enough is an enough.”

   a. Israel could use a David today, Netanyahu and IDF.
   b. America could use a David today.
   c. The Lord’s Churches could use a David today.

II. COURAGE CHOOSES THE RIGHT MOTIVES.

A. Those who may have considered fighting Goliath were not acting out of courage; they were looking at the possible material gains.

1 Samuel 17:25 “And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? Surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father’s house free in Israel.”

1. The king would make him rich, he would marry the king’s daughter, and his entire house would be tax-free.

2. Many are lured away by the smell of money and the smile of a pretty face.

3. Be careful of the snare and pit-falls of Satan.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 6And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

B. David did not judge the situation by the money or the pretty face. Not once did he ask, “What’s in this for me?”

1. David’s motives were aroused by spiritual concerns and not material gains.
2. The armies of the living God had been defied, forty times over.

1 Samuel 17:8-10 “And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 5If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. 10And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.”

3. David’s only motive was to see the name of God honored.

1 Samuel 17:46 “This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.”

C. Satan’s giants dare us to come out and fight.
1. Our motives must be right, this enables us to find the courage needed to face the challenge.
2. Being courageous shows the world... “If God be for us, who can be against us? ...we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Rom. 8:31, 37).
3. Who can defeat us? We are more than just winners because Jesus loves us.

1 John 4:4 “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

III. COURAGE Chooses THE RIGHT WEAPONS

A. Before we look at the weapons David used, let us look at what David was facing.

1. Goliath was not your average G.I. Joe; he was a “man of war from his youth”

1 Samuel 17:33 “And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

2. His size of “six cubits and a span” would stand out on any basketball court.

1 Samuel 17:4 “And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.”

3. By using today’s standard of measurement, Goliath would be 9 feet 6 inches tall, add to this his coat of armor weighing 200 pounds, and a spear with a head weighing 19 pounds.

4. Goliath presented a huge, well-armed, and well-prepared enemy.

5. Satan will put giants in our way that seem too big for us to handle, giants that say to us:

   a. “You’ve tried so quit because nothing is going to work,”
   b. “You’ve been doing it too long, you’re hooked,”
   c. “You’re not hurting anyone.”

6. These are excuses we’ve all heard. The problem is the word I. God will deliver us, not I can, or I will.

7. David did not take the credit for slaying the lion or the bear that came upon his flocks, he gave the Lord all the credit.

1 Samuel 17:34-37 “And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 

37 David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.”

8. David trusted the Lord once again. Who are we trusting?

B. By putting his armor on David, Saul did little more than weigh him down to where he could hardly move, let alone fight Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:38-39 “And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. 

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.”

1. Most would have been so excited about wearing the King’s armor that all else would have been forgotten.

2. Often well-meaning pastors, teachers, and adults get weighed down with unnecessary things that make it difficult for them to find the courage needed to stand up for the Lord.

3. Have the courage to go with what you know really works. It is God’s Word, Prayer, Church and fellowship of God’s people.

C. There are a lot of programs promising to rid us of our giants.
1. The problem is many rely strictly on their program. When the program is over, the person is returned to his same old neighborhood, friends, and habits. In order for a program to be successful, it must include Jesus - Jesus is the giant killer.

2. Yes, David used a sling and stone.

1 Samuel 17:40 “And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.”

3. But his guidance system was his faith in the Lord.

1 Samuel 17:45 “Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’S, and he will give you into our hands.”

4. David knew the Lord was with him and that He would deliver him by His own hand.

5. David was sure the Lord would not fail.

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

6. David saw no need to fear this one giant or 1,000s more like him. The Lord was his shield and salvation.

Psalm 3:1-8 “LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me. 2Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah 3But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. 4I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah 5I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. 6I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. 7Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. 8Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah”

7. The enemy was sure to fall, because he was challenging God.

Psalm 27:1-3 “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? 2When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. 3Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.”

8. We can defeat the giants in our life and those Satan send at the Church through Christ who gives us strength.

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

9. God can claim the victory with an army or with one dedicated courageous teenager.

1 Samuel 14:6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.”

IV. COURAGE CHOOSES THE PATH TO VICTORY.

A. Those on both sides watched in amazement. Goliath could not believe what he saw in front of him.

1 Samuel 17:42-44 “And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained (made fun of) him: for he was but a youth
(adolescent), and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. 43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."

1. He thought, “This will be the easiest battle I’ve ever won.”
2. He underestimated the power of one courageous young man’s whose faith was in the Lord.
3. David did not hesitate, he ran to meet Goliath and to the battle.

1 Samuel 17:49, 50 “And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.”

4. We will win the battle with the type of courage that stands up with the Lord, courage that puts on the whole armor of God, and not the armor of others.

Ephesians 6:10-18 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

B. David made sure of the victory, he finished the job by cutting off Goliath’s head.

1 Samuel 17:51 “Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.”

1. Once we have the giant down let us make sure he stays there.
2. Are you struggling with a giant? Don’t give up. The Word, and faith will put the giant on the ground; Now cut his head off.
3. How do we do this? Faith is our victory as it was for David.

1 John 5:4, 5 “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION:

A. David advertised the victory God gave him. The victory gave David added courage to boldly show others what the Lord had done.
B. David carried the head of Goliath back to Jerusalem as a testimony to others.

1 Samuel 17:54 “And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.”

C. With the Lord on our side, we can choose courage that bravely faces the foe, courage that fears no evil, courage that can be at ease even in the presence of the giants.
D. Battle with the giants of Goliath’s family continued, but God gave continued to give the victory.

1 Chronicles 20:4-8 “And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the
children of the giant: and they were subdued. 
5 And there was war again with the Philistines; 
and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the 
brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear 
staff was like a weaver’s beam. 6 And yet again 
there was war at Gath, where was a man of 
great stature, whose fingers and toes were 
four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on 
each foot: and he also was the son of the giant. 
7 But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of 
Shimea David’s brother slew him. 8 These were 
born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by 
the hand of David, and by the hand of his 
servants.”

4. We must learn to be giant killers all our 
Christian and Pastoral life.
5. Let us pray for and choose courage that will 
stand up for the Lord and the right, courage that 
will boldly tell others I am on the Lord’s side.

Bro. Larry Crouch

The Urgency of Preaching the Word 
In Declaring the True Gospel 
II Timothy 4:2; Romans 10:14-17

Introduction
In Second Timothy chapter four we find the Apostle Paul is coming to the end of his journey on this earth. These are his last words to Timothy. Last words carry a great deal of weight. Paul told Timothy to “Preach the Word”.

The Title of my subject is ‘The Urgency of Preaching the Word in Declaring the True Gospel’. The word urgency is defined as:
1. Calling for immediate attention.
2. Pressing
3. Urging insistently

Paul gave Timothy divine instructions concerning the matter of preaching the Word.

I. The Need is Great for the Message of Truth. 
II Timothy 4:2

A. Preach the Word. The word ‘preach’ is a verb in the present tense also in the imperative mood and means to preach like a herald. Also means to use a loud clear voice so everyone could hear. I think about Isaiah 58:1 and I Corinthians 14:8. So it is a message to be heard and heeded. The word ‘preach’ in II Timothy 4:2 also means to preach the Word with a special reference to the Gospel.

B. We are to preach the Gospel in all its purity and simplicity. There is nothing better than the Gospel. I still believe that the Word of God will do the Work of God. The Gospel is better than social action. The Gospel is better than political involvement. The Gospel is better than religious ritual. What is needed today is the Message of Truth.

II. The Need is Great that we be Masters of the Word.

A. “Preach the Word” implies knowing the Word, rightly dividing it, and making it understandable and applicable to the lives of the people.
B. Paul told Timothy to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the Word of Truth”. II Timothy 2:15
C. There is to be a proper exegesis of the scriptures. Certainly expository preaching is one of the best ways to fulfill this task.

III. The Need is Great for Men of Faith Divinely Called of God. Romans 10:14-17

A. Paul was concerned not only about his generation but also for the future generations. Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2:1-3, “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

IV. The Need is Great that We Remember “It Pays to Serve God”. II Timothy 4:7-8
A. Paul told Timothy, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also who love His appearing.” II Timothy 4:8

B. Therefore let us be faithful to the One who has called us. Preach the Word.

Bro. Larry Butte

Characteristics of Expository Preaching
American Baptist Association Theological Schools
Biennial Meeting,
March 4th, 2015 - Fresno, California

I. Authoritative - I Corinthians 4:1-6

A. The Man - Ministers of Christ
   1. The Stewards Responsibility
      i. Faithful
         a. To the Mysteries of God
            1) Faithful Relationship to God
            2) Faithful Walk with God
            3) Faithful to our Calling
            4) Faithful to DO the Work of our Calling

B. The Message - Mysteries of God
   1. We are commanded to Maintain the Message
      - No deviations

II. Reverent Expectation - Nehemiah 8:1-8

A. The Motivation - The people desired only to Hear the Words of the Law Read
   1. The People Gathered to Hear the Law
      i. Not to See a Personality
      ii. Not to Witness a Performance
   2. The People Were Attentive
      i. They had a prepared heart for the Word

B. The Method - Ezra led the People in personal example
   1. He Blessed the Lord
      i. He Displayed the Example of Adoration to the people.
      ii. His adoration was reverent.
      iii. His adoration was public.

III. Central to Worship Service and Experience - Luke 10:38-42

A. The Manifestation - The Word Produces Worship
   - The exposition of the Word is the substance of Christian Growth and Viability
   - "Worship" - "to kiss, like a dog licking his masters hand; To do reverence to adore"
   1. It is not "Hosting" Jesus
   2. It is not Programming the Agenda
   3. It is about assuming the position of the hungry pupil who sits humbly in amazement as the beautiful word of Life fall from the lips of the Saviour.

Conclusion:
- The words declared by Jesus produced adoration in the heart of Mary.
- While Martha was cumbered about the labor required in "hosting" Jesus, she brought accusation against the apparent inactivity of her sister, who sat at the feet of Jesus, listening to His words.
- When the accusation came, Jesus defended the attitude and actions of Mary's worship.

May we, like Mary, allow the Words of the Lord to manifest such a genuine "God Defending Worship" within you and I !

Bro. Darry Hatfield

TEXT-DRIVEN PREACHING
The Necessity of Expository Preaching
Text - Matthew 7:28, 29  2 Timothy 4:2

Introduction:

A. In the midst of the current culture where moral and doctrinal absolutes seemingly don't exist, the need for New Testament churches and God-called preachers, in particular, to be clear in declaring the Word of truth as found in the Old and New Testaments.

1. In a climate of the lack of certainty and the increase in tentativeness, pastors in New Testament church pulpits are to convey with unwavering conviction concerning the declaration of truths which are based on the settled certainty
of Scripture.

a. One might ask, "Where have all the absolutes gone?"

b. In dealing with the post-modern mentality, and beyond, where everything is seemingly relative, many Christian leaders have turned their version of Christianity into a post-modern mind set.

c. The emerging church movement has cast serious doubt upon the issue of the clarity of Scripture.

d. It manifests itself in a false sense of humility and states, "We're too humble to say that we know what the Bible says."

e. As such, it becomes a celebration of ignorance.

f. But what's really being advocated, in a subtle way, is not the lack of clarity of the Word of God, but a denial of Scripture's inspiration and its authority over men.

2. How can a pastor preach if he has an ever-changing mind.

a. In a ministry mind-set which is fixed on providing felt-needs, rather than actual needs, some ministers gravitate toward seeking to satisfy people from a seeker-sensitive mentality.

b. In many pulpits in the world, there is the lack of expectation to hear anything which advocates the clear and distinctive truths of the Bible.

c. Simply stated, there are far too few instances of preachers speaking with authority.

B. In the conclusion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, the Lord summarized the vision He set forth concerning Kingdom living.

1. His authoritative teaching was clear and took issue with the comfort of the religious traditions and moral teaching of His day.

a. His standards far exceeded even the stated principles of the Law of Moses.

b. The Law condemned murder; Jesus noted God's disapproval of anger.

c. The Law condemned adultery; Jesus noted God's disapproval of lust.

d. Jesus stated "You have heard it was said," "but I say to you."

2. Jesus refused to engage in argumentative theology or speculate, as the religious leaders did, regarding the moral code of the rabbinic interpretation of the Law.

a. He rejected rabbinical reasoning completely.

b. He refused to enter into discussions to resolve moral dilemmas.

I. The Authority of Christ

A. The radical nature of Jesus' teaching and the focus of His entire earthly ministry was fully demonstrated in the Sermon on the Mount.

1. One of the reasons it was so radical in comparison to the teachings of the religious leaders of His day is that it was based on His divinely-given authority.

a. When He taught, He never cited human authorities, enter into irrelevant debates, or whitewash His words.

b. He spoke on the basis of His own unique authority.

c. And He legitimized His authority by the demonstration of His ministry of healing the sick, casting out demons and, most clearly, in His forgiveness of sins.

d. And having firmly declared His authoritative message, He stared down the popular religious authorities of those times.

2. At the conclusion of Matthew's Gospel account, He unequivocally announced that ALL authority in heaven and on earth had been divinely granted to Him.

a. And on the basis of that authority, He sent the disciples of the Jerusalem church into the world as His emissaries.

b. And that authority of Christ is still in effect today and will be until He descends in power, majesty, and glory at the conclusion of the age.
B. This is all about divine authority.
   1. There would be no Gospel but for Christ's display of this authority.
      a. No salvation, no forgiveness of sins, and no hope.
      b. And, by the way, the authority of Christ was manifested when He established His church.

II. The Reaction of the Crowds toward Christ's Authority

A. The Scripture says that the crowds were astonished at His teaching - astonished.
   1. The word "astonished" is translated from the word ἐκπλήσσω and means "to be struck with amazement."
      a. They had never seen nor heard anything like that before.
      b. Every religious teacher they had ever heard repeatedly cited other teachers as authorities.
      c. And those teachers hemmed and hawed, proposed and later retracted their proposals.
      d. They pitted one rabbinic interpretation against another, and left themselves room for further qualification.
   2. Two of the most notable sages of Israel were Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Shammai.
      a. They were contemporaries who lived during the reign of King Herod (37 BC - 4 AD), knew each other well, and were friends in spite of different philosophical views concerning the Law.
      b. Shammai demanded a very strict observance of the Mosaic Law and was the least popular of the two as a result.
      c. Hillel was much more prone to spin the principles of the Law to conform to more liberal views and gave greater yield to the interpretations of the earlier sages then to the Law itself.
      d. The Talmud records that Beit Hillel (the House of Hillel) and Beit Shammai (the House of Shammai) held over 300 differences of opinion regarding the rulings of the Law.
   e. The later rabbis generally sided with Beit Hillel, although they noted that both were valid for the study of Torah.
   f. The opinions of Beit Hillel were more highly regarded and accepted by the Jewish High Court, the Sanhedrin.
   g. When the opinions of Beit Shammai differed from those of Beit Hillel, the Sanhedrin determined that the opinions of Shammai were null and void.

B. The crowds who heard Jesus teach recognized that Jesus taught with an authority which was unprecedented unique.
   1. He taught "as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."
      a. The scribes were the licensed teachers of the Law.
      b. They interpreted the Law by investigating precedent and tradition.
      c. Their rulings were approximations and were carefully hedged.
      d. Nothing was conclusive.
      e. One tradition was placed alongside another opposing tradition.
      f. One interpretation was placed alongside another opposing interpretation.
   2. Jesus informed that crowd that their righteousness had to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.
      a. In comparison, Jesus informed the people that the scribes' authority was just not enough.

And once they heard Jesus, many of them would never again listen to one who really didn't have divine authority, nor should they

III. The Preacher's Authority: A Delegated Authority

A. Even though Jesus spoke on the basis of His own authority, a statement immediately emerges concerning the authority of the preacher in the pulpit.
1. We do NOT have the divine authority possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ.
   a. While that is certainly true, we possess a delegated authority, but an authority nonetheless.
   b. As stewards of the authority of the Word of God, we have been given a clear assignment of preaching the Word, of feeding the flock of God, of teaching the all things to God’s churches.
   c. No, we do not possess divine authority, but the One who clearly possesses divine authority has given us a divine call to serve His churches by proclaiming, expounding, and applying the Word of God.

2. Our delegated authority is not our own.
   a. We are called to the task of preaching the Bible, in season and out of season.
   b. We are to rightly divide the Word of truth, and to teach the infinite riches of God.
   c. There are no certainties without the authority of Scripture.
   d. There is no clarity if the Word of God is subverted, mistrusted, or ignored.

B. The crowds were utterly amazed when they heard Jesus preach.
   1. The congregations of today are starving for the astonishment of hearing the preacher do nothing less than teach and preach on the basis of the authority of the Word of God.
      a. There is a crisis in the pulpits of America.
      b. There may even be a crisis in the pulpits of the churches of the American Baptist Association.
      c. And the only correction or recovery is a return to the clear proclamation of Scripture and declare its priority in New Testament church ministry.

Conclusion

A. Because of those who have been exposed to anemic teaching and preaching, there is a blessed few people who are on a desperate search for real Bible truth and seek for churches whose pastors preach with conviction, clarity, and passion.

B. The crowds were utterly amazed when they heard Jesus preach.

1. The congregations of today are starving for the astonishment of hearing the preacher do nothing less than teach and preach on the basis of the authority of the Word of God.
   a. There is a crisis in the pulpits of America.
   b. There may even be a crisis in the pulpits of the churches of the American Baptist Association.
   c. And the only correction or recovery is a return to the clear proclamation of Scripture and declare its priority in New Testament church ministry.

Bro. David Butimore